United Nations E/ICEF/2004/15

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
22 July 2004

Original: English

For information

United Nations Children's Fund
Executive Board
Second regular session 2004
13-17 September 2004
Item 7 of the provisional agenda*

UNICEF follow-up to the fourteenth meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board

Background

1. As a cosponsor of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), UNICEF has provided leadership and has been active in several aspects of the HIV/AIDS response. The organization has contributed to progress made on many of the recommendations of the fourteenth meeting of the Programme Coordinating Board (PCB), held in June 2003. UNICEF reports on these activities and results through the Executive Director's annual report to the Executive Board, the annual HIV/AIDS Thematic Report and the reporting requirements of the UNAIDS Unified Budget and Workplan. The following is a brief summary highlighting some of the contributions of UNICEF.

2. **Expand efforts to track costs and assess global resource needs**. UNICEF is spearheading a collaborative effort with the United States Agency for International Development, UNAIDS, the Earth Institute and the Futures Group to estimate the costs for providing a comprehensive package of care and support activities for orphans in sub-Saharan Africa. Data are being collected in 24 countries on unit costs for various services provided by different types of organizations. Available for the first time in 2004, these cost estimates will be of broad use for advocacy, resource mobilization, programming and evaluation.

3. **Assist countries in accessing new resources**. Over the past two years, UNICEF country and regional offices have dedicated significant technical assistance to supporting national partners in developing proposals for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and the World Bank's multicountry AIDS programme. Examples of support given to successful proposals are found in all regions, especially many countries in East and West Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean. A major challenge now is to provide programming support to help

* E/ICEF/2004/12.

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governments turn new resources into effective programmes. UNAIDS is working with its cosponsors to develop a systematic approach to addressing this need. Particular concerns for UNICEF are that the new resources be used to build national capacities, that a balance be maintained between prevention and treatment and that greater attention be given to the well-being of children.

4. **Promoting issues relating to women and girls in the response to HIV/AIDS**. In 2003, the Secretary-General requested the Executive Director to chair a Task Force on Women, Girls and HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa. With the involvement of UNAIDS, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Group Office and other United Nations agencies, the Task Force visited the nine countries most affected by HIV/AIDS. This visit was followed by a regional consultation of Task Force members, eminent leaders and those active in support of gender and HIV/AIDS issues in the nine countries. Endorsed by the Secretary-General, the Task Force report includes recommendations on HIV prevention, girls' education, violence, property and inheritance rights, the role of women and girls as caregivers and HIV/AIDS care and treatment for women and girls. UNICEF is working closely with UNAIDS and other United Nations agencies in Southern Africa to support governments and other partners to implement these recommendations. UNICEF is also leading the working group on girls' education for the Global Coalition on Women and AIDS. The Executive Director continues to actively advocate on these issues worldwide.

5. **Integrating emergency, humanitarian and development response**. UNICEF is a key partner in efforts to accelerate the international response on HIV/AIDS and emergencies. UNICEF offices have played a large role in integrating HIV/AIDS into Consolidated Appeal plans, as was done for the Southern African emergency. Ten of the countries most affected by conflict/emergencies have included HIV issues within their contingency plans. Others have included HIV in their situation analyses, acknowledging the importance of addressing HIV/AIDS in emergencies. During 2003, HIV/AIDS was included in the UNICEF Core Commitments for Children (CCCs) in emergencies. UNICEF has played an active role in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Reference Group on HIV/AIDS in Emergency Settings, which developed "Guidelines for HIV/AIDS Interventions in Emergency Settings". UNICEF developed its CCCs to accord with these guidelines.

6. **Reducing stigma and discrimination associated with HIV/AIDS**. UNICEF offices are active in efforts to reduce stigma and discrimination at the global, regional and country levels. An important focus has been on mobilizing and engaging leadership among religious leaders and parliamentarians in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Two key information/action kits for these groups were finalized in 2003. UNICEF is gaining broad experience in working with religious leaders to reduce stigma and discrimination and to support vulnerable groups in several regions and countries. In an effort to intensify action in East Asia and the Pacific (also recommended by the fourteenth meeting of the PCB), UNICEF has promoted the Regional Religious Leadership Initiative since 2002. As part of this initiative, Buddhist leaders have built community networks to support vulnerable families. This activity, which originated in Thailand, has been expanding to other countries. In South Asia in 2002, UNICEF organized the ground-breaking South Asia Inter-faith Consultation on Children, Young People and HIV/AIDS. In Latin America, UNICEF regional and country offices are working with the *Consejo Episcopal*

Latinoamericano (Latin American Conference of Catholic Bishops) on prevention and youth issues. In Eastern and Southern Africa, UNICEF partnered with the World Conference of Religions for Peace to produce the "Study of the Response by Faith-Based Organizations to Orphans and Vulnerable Children", which covers six countries.